

*Approved at the 4/17/24  
Association meeting.*

## MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 21, 2024, ASSOCIATION MEETING

Officers present: Chris Hjelt, Co-President, presiding; Elly Rumelt, Co-President; Nancy Chamberlin, Treasurer; George Teter, Vice-President; Alaire Rieffel, Secretary.

Staff Members present: Patrick Arguin, CEO; Chris Hague, Facilities Manager; Kathi Brown, Director of Human Resources. On Zoom: Holly Smith-Bové, CFO; Rob Olmsted, Director of Wellness and Care Coordination.

Opening: Chris called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and asked for a moment of silence.

Comings and goings: Ginny Biggie and Sarah Ismail are happily back home following hospitalizations. Rebecca Wondriska and Jo Davis have relocated to other facilities and are greatly missed.

Gratitudes: To Nancy Felton and Myra Gordon for producing a comprehensive guide to campus organizations; to Chris Hague for his leadership and service as Facilities Manager; to John and Lou Ratté for the excellent presentation by their son, Chris; and to Cynthia Stanton for arranging Lathrop's participation in the Mass Save program.

Treasurer's Report: Nancy Chamberlin presented the Treasurer's Report as follows:

*The North campus Florence Bank account continues to have a balance of \$4770.77; no checks were issued since the last report. The Lathrop-administered North Association account has a balance of \$13,480.50; one check for \$150 was issued to a program committee speaker.*

The Proceedings of the November 15, 2023, Association Meeting were approved and thereby became Minutes and will be placed in the binder in the library.

### Community Conversation:

At the Strategic Planning Retreat in November 2022 architect Max Winter defined the challenge of aging in community as balancing the individual needs of aging with the shared needs of community. In our breakout groups at the Association meeting on February 21 we addressed this challenge from a variety of angles.

**Group 1** discussed the difference between “independent living” and “aging in community.”

It was recognized that the majority of residents did not come to Lathrop for completely “independent” lives; community of some sort was also sought. As it becomes clear that many residents wish to remain here while their individual needs increase, the meaning of community changes. The needs assessment questionnaire which most residents filled out to assist the strategic planning process plus the isolation of the pandemic exposed the importance of changing the definition of community to include more support and outreach.

Questions for further discussion

Deepening and refining our definition of community.

What -if any- participation is mandatory?

What are the principles and the necessary means of communication for a healthy community?

What are the goals of our community? to live independently longer? To live a “richer” life? Some thing(s) else?

**Group 2** discussed the advantages of being a “do it yourself” community,

Changes have taken place: staff does less and residents more than in the past. There are more activities and a greater variety, so that different interests and preferences are better addressed leading to community vitality. Activity and agency is healthy for bodies and brains. The structure of strong committees with room for individual ideas such as Global Forum has been effective. Participation in activities by planning, setting up and cleaning up helps newcomers meet other residents and feel part of the community.

Questions for further discussion:

Support for participation in the larger community beyond Lathrop. Younger residents and residents who move to Lathrop from the area bring strong existing connections. Could there be other means of encouragement for more participation in the larger community?

Continuation of activities when resident leadership ages or is otherwise unable to continue. What, if any, activities need to be continued? How do we encourage turnover of leadership to a new group of leaders?

**Group 3** discussed the tasks done by staff.

Group members expressed great enthusiasm for staff, especially for the Meeting House coordinator, who fills a variety of roles.

Questions for further discussion:

Possible overload of the Meeting House coordinator. Would an informational sheet provided as part of the welcome package for newcomers covering some of the many questions that she answers reduce this overload?

Help in time of bereavement. Could there be a staff member who reaches out to newly bereaved residents to help work through financial and other issues? Answers to these questions could also be provided on the informational sheet.

**Group 4** discussed resident mutual support

Many ways we support each other were listed: welcoming newcomers with an assigned welcome partner as well as other ways lanes greet their new neighbor, dog walks, picking up mail, morning check-in, informing neighbors when traveling, transportation etc.

Gains from helping out include deepening sense of community, and enjoyment of neighborliness.

Questions for Further discussion:

Identification of what communication is appropriate about individual situations:  
How do we know what to do and how to do it?

Appropriate response in an emergency

**Group 5** discussed the financial implications of more institutional support.

A priority was keeping the price of Lathrop to an affordable level.

Is Lathrop already providing everything that is needed or wanted?

Questions for Further Discussion:

Some more assistance to the Meeting House Coordinator (acknowledgement was made that this is already being considered)

**Group 6** discussed the boundaries between neighborliness and the need for professional help.

The difference between short term and long term needs was acknowledged, with neighbors being often able to take care of the former while the latter called for professional help. In some circumstances the two kinds of assistance could be combined.

Sometimes just saying hello can be helpful.

Questions for further discussion:

Expanded use of the form on which lane members can indicate what kinds of help they would wish to have if temporarily disabled and what kinds of help they are willing to offer others.

The challenges of respecting privacy while also responding to needs and the challenge of being neighborly without being intrusive

Identification of circumstances in which notifying Wellness staff without the request of a neighbor are necessary and/or appropriate.

**Group 7** discussed transportation.

Similarly to the results on the questionnaire in 2022 this remains an area of great concern. Transportation becomes a greater need with age, while the transportation services provided by Lathrop appear to have decreased rather than increased.

Particularly wanted:

Transportation at night to take advantage of the many opportunities for plays, concerts and other entertainment that are available in this area.

Transportation to the Easthampton campus for dinner at the Inn or for an event. Inability to attend the farewell for Chris Hague was a regret for many.

Questions for Further Discussion

Payment for transportation services. Should the service fee be increased or should transportation be paid for when used?

Communication of transportation office with residents. Can the office use written responses to requests for rides or for cancellations as they are better than phone responses especially when there are memory issues.

#### New Business:

New Plantings: Dale LaBonté provided an update on current efforts to provide additional plantings on the Northampton campus. The plants will be available in April from Nasami Nursery. Dale expects to have a proposal for approval at the March Council meeting.

Nominating Committee: Sue Bastek reported on the activities of the Nominating Committee, which also includes Pamela White and Gary Roodman. The Committee is sponsoring a program next week so current officers can explain what holding these offices entails.

#### Management Reports:

CEO Report: Patrick Arguin described several recent initiatives: An employee engagement survey was conducted last month and the results will be shared. A staff leadership retreat was held for both campuses. Rob demonstrated the use of a stair safety chair. As part of the Strategic Plan, Management is reviewing priorities, including space needs and tours of the Inn, the Meeting House and the Blue House. The new Kendal CEO, Vassar Byrd, will be on both campuses March 13 and 14. Finally, Patrick plans to bring additional employees from each department to Council and Association meetings to help familiarize them with the concerns of residents.

Finance: Holly (on Zoom) reported that Lathrop’s financial health continues to be good, with almost complete occupancy on both campuses and at the Inn. Our goal of 150 days of cash on hand has been exceeded. Currently it is 124 days. She can provide additional information at her financial roundtables.

Wellness: Rob (on Zoom) reminded residents who have not done so to complete or update documents such as their “File of Life,” Durable Power of Attorney, and Health Care Proxy. It is important to plan for future health crises. Fall prevention is the single most important way to prevent crises.

Facilities: Chris Hague, who is resigning effective Friday, said he believes he has left Lathrop in better condition. The RISE energy efficiency program is now available at no cost to Lathrop. A lighting box at the Meeting House needs to be replaced. Currently the tentative plan is to install a “Lula” elevator in a corner of the mailroom. Residents expressed great appreciation for Chris’s accomplishments and wished him good luck in his new endeavors.

Human Resources: Kathi noted the departure of Chris Hague and Matt Meers. There is the expected seasonal changeover of waitpersons in the dining room as students depart for college, etc. Elly asked if our wages are competitive since turnover is expensive. Kathi said she uses both local comparators and other Kendal properties. She said we are competitive. Only the “kitchen kids” work at minimum wages.

Board report:

Marlisa Parker reported that the Board had viewed a video produced by the Land Conservation Committee. The audit report expressed no concerns. The Board is looking for at least three new members and is discussing how often to meet. Residents will be receiving an annual survey to complete, a Kendal requirement.

Committee Reports:

Shelley Schieffelin announced that the Program Committee is sponsoring a talk by the CEO of historic Deerfield on April 17, to be followed by a trip to that location. A trip to Turners Falls is also planned. A report from this committee is attached.

Reports from the Music Committee, the Program Committee, and the Fitness Committee are attached.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45.

Respectfully submitted: Alaire Rieffel, Secretary

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ADDENDA:

### **Music Committee Association Report for 2/21/24**

Below are listed all currently booked upcoming as of 2/20/24. All are on Sundays at 3pm unless otherwise noted. Jeff Mitchell

#### **February 25: Green Heron**

Betsy and Scott Heron pair string instruments with vocal harmonies to offer music stretching across the entire folk landscape: old-time, folk, bluegrass, country, celtic and blues.

#### **March 10: UMass Amherst Music Students**

Arranged with violinist Elizabeth Chang, who promises "several groups ranging from duos to quintets, mostly strings or strings and pianos, mostly from the western classical tradition." Details to come!

#### **March 24: Mark Fraser and Jerry Noble (at 4:30pm)**

Cellist Mark Fraser and Pianist Clifton (Jerry) Noble—two of the Pioneer Valley's finest musicians, return for a characteristically exciting duo program.

#### **April 14: Adrienne Greenbaum and Allison Monroe**

Flutist Adrienne Greenbaum shines in both klezmer and classical music. She'll be joined by baroque violinist Allison Monroe in an "April in Paris" program with a few extra wrinkles.

#### **April 28: Northampton Flutes (Note changed date; was April 7.)**

Three fine flutists—Sue Kurian, Nancy Janoson, and George Owens—offering music from the Renaissance to today on an array of flutes of all sizes, from tiny (piccolo) to enormous (contrabass).

#### **May 19: Sarah Briggs, Gregory Hayes, and a third musician**

Briggs (violin) and Hayes (piano) have played great Haydn and Schubert for as members of the Hampshire Trio. They'll return in a new trio with either a cellist or a horn player. This mystery will be solved—stay tuned!

#### **June 9: Peter Blanchette**

The inventor and master of the archguitar, with music ranging from Bach suites to traditional Irish melodies to works of the present day.

#### **June 23: The Wise Guys and On That Note**

Two of our region's favorite a-cappella singing groups, offering upbeat classic and contemporary pop songs, and traditional folk songs. Both groups are directed by Jeff Olmstead,

#### **September 8: Eveline MacDougall and John Clark**

Working jazz, classical, traditional, and contemporary genres, (Clark on French horn and electric bass) and MacDougall (on violin, accordion, and viola) offer fresh takes on old favorites as well as original compositions and arrangements.

**Additional concerts are now being scheduled for 2024.**

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**Report of the Program Committee:**

Members of the Program Committee: Jean Shackleford and Shelley Schieffelin (co-chairs), Martha Cushman (secretary), Gillian Morbey, Miriam Moss, Dave Morrisey, Judy Hyde  
The committee meets on the third Thursday of the month.

November 2023 –Panel discussion candidates for School Committee – Speaker and lunch with Monte Belmonte (NEPM) (in costume). Participated in Monte’s march, partnering with an area school. Thanksgiving Potluck (organized by Claire F.). Wine and Cheese at some point.

December 2023 Decorating Meeting House In whites with lights; Lighting the menorah (unplanned party – with big cleanup). Streaming performance of Windborne, and the Messiah Complex. Solstice wine and cheese (potluck appetizers). New Year’s Eve movie and potluck snacks and drinks.

January 2024 Team from Cooley Dickinson (nurse, development department) on new ER plans and functioning and services. Chili Cook Up Potluck. Zoom with Ward 1 City Councilor Stan Moulton.

February 2024, David Brule on local indigenous history, research and activities; Chris Ratte, archeologist, on Finding Gold at a dig in Turkey; Trip to Majestic Theatre; Trip to Eric Carle Museum; Winter Warmer – soup at leap year. Valentine’s Day Wine and Cheese.

March 2024. 2 Programs Planned: Afternoon with Happier Valley Improv Group. *Writing a Woman’s Life*; Video and talk *Where I Became* by Kate Geis; Deb Ondo, Food Banks and Programs in Western MA, Pi Day Potluck savory and sweet pies; to Emily Dickinson homes in Amherst. (Working with artist for Gallery Talk.)

April 2024. Programs Planned: John Davis speaking on Historic Deerfield. Possible trip to houses of Emily Dickinson (Homestead and Evergreen). View the solar eclipse

May 2024. Programs Planned: Field trip to Historic Deerfield for tour and lunch at the Inn. Possible trip to see Re-enactment of the 1874 Dam Breach in Williamsburg. Zoom with Ward One Councilor Stan Moulton and School Committee Representative Holly Ghazy.

Jean Shackleford and Shelley Schieffelin’s term as co-chairs of the Program Committee end.

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Dear North Lathrop Community,

The committee is pleased to report that the response rate to the survey was very gratifying. In total there were 43 questionnaire responses, which represents nearly half the community.



The overall impression is that residents are, in general, quite satisfied with what is being offered to the community in the areas of body, mind and spirit. The activities most popular are Bones & Balance, and other movement training classes, such as Jen's balance classes, Country Dancing, Tai Chi, Hatha and Chair Yoga. The availability of our Gym's Fitness Equipment also gets much recognition.

Walking, social walking and walking in groups are very popular, and in particular, the Conte Reserve Walk got an enthusiastic response from people wishing to do it again. The committee is planning to organize another walk there sometime in the spring (before the mosquitoes come) but several other alternative sites in the local area have been suggested and are being looked into for a summer outing.

There was ample interest in having presenters give talks and demonstrations of several kinds of healing modalities in the Gathering Room. The most popular were acupuncture, reflexology, and Reiki. In fact, a local acupuncture practitioner has been contacted to offer a talk and demonstration sometime within the next two months.

Interest was expressed in a number of activities that have not been actively engaged in lately. Meditation sessions, both silent and guided, have been suggested, as well as having Ping Pong sessions revived.

In terms of what activities that were thought lacking, there was a scattering about 20 different items. They included: weight training classes, low impact aerobics, Silver Sneaker exercise classes, meditation, chess, bocce, additional balance classes, extra gym equipment, more outside speakers, painting, etc. The yoga class currently conducted by an outside instructor is presently oversubscribed due to lack of wall space.

Responses to the survey were anonymous so if anyone would like to see the individual 43 questionnaire responses, we can gladly provide them.

Stay fit everyone, each in your own way!

Joe Kulin  
on behalf of the Fitness Committee